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CALL ME FOR YOUR FREE COPY OF THIS YEAR'S:
Laws For Seniors • Laws For Children • Education Laws
Environment Laws • Major Public Acts • Laws for Businesses

Unfinished Business

The drastic increase in medical malpractice insurance has been a pressing issue. We took a significant step this year when the General Assembly passed a comprehensive bill to offset the insurance rates. The medical malpractice reform legislation does not cap awards; it does give judges the power to review awards of \$1 million or more; requires mandatory mediation; includes provisions to reduce frivolous lawsuits; mandates prior authorization of malpractice rates by the state insurance commissioner; allows doctors to write off their premiums against their state income taxes; and requires hospitals to adopt protocols, report errors and investigate allegations of medical errors, all in an effort to strengthen patient safety. In this ongoing battle between lawyers, doctors and insurance companies, I voted for you, the patients. Unfortunately, the Governor vetoed this important legislation. I will continue to fight for meaningful reform.

Another bill that was defeated this session would have promoted stem cell research and biomedical technology in Connecticut. Over the past few years it has been shown that stem cell research is the new frontier of medical science. This technology has the ability to find cures for Parkinson's, Alzheimer's disease, Multiple Sclerosis and spinal cord injuries. A concern with the bill was a possibility of cloning, but this bill would have completely banned cloning. This research could help thousands of people currently suffering through a number of ailments. I hope next year we can get this critical legislation passed.

Legislative Office Building, Room 4107
Hartford, CT 06106-1591
Please Keep in Touch
13 Stillman Ave.
Danbury, CT 06810
Home: 778.5127
Toll-free: 1.800.842.1902
e-mail: bob.godfrey@po.state.ct.us
www.cga.state.ct.us/hdo



110th District

bob GODFREY
state representative

STATE REPRESENTATIVE BOB GODFREY DEPUTY MAJORITY LEADER

110TH DISTRICT • DANBURY

Capitol News

Working for Danbury

"Danbury is my lifelong hometown. Danbury comes first."

This year I was able to secure more funding for Danbury and fought to get state grants for important local initiatives. These funds will offset some of the property tax increases our homeowners face and will improve the quality of life for all of us. I voted against the last two budgets because they taxed our working families too heavily while severely cutting state services our residents desperately need. I'm happy to say we were able to reverse some of the most drastic cuts we had to implement over the past year, *without raising taxes!* Here are some highlights from the budget:

- Danbury received an increase of \$1,034,930 in Education Cost Sharing Funds, for a total of \$16,280,494 to pay for the education of our children.
- Danbury received an increase \$500,000 for being a priority school district, for a total of \$2,084,125.
- Danbury received an increase of \$109,111 in Town Aid Road (TAR) Funds, for a total of \$290,232 to improve the roadways of our city.
- Added \$25 million to the Transportation Strategy Board, a portion of which will be used to decrease traffic congestion in the Greater Danbury area.
- Fought for \$875,000 in bond funds to redesign the bridge that runs over Kohanza Brook to solve the flooding problems that neighborhood had.
- Ensured Western Connecticut State University continues to grow and benefit Danbury by supporting over \$800,000 in new funds to the campus.
- Highland Avenue Park will receive \$60,000 to completely renovate and modernize the playscapes, basketball court, and pool.
- Secured a \$56,000 grant-in-aid to the Hispanic Center of Greater Danbury, Inc. for renovations to its facility at 87 West Street in Danbury.
- Added \$4.6 million to the DMR waiting list so our disabled citizens can get the help they, and their families, need.
- Raised the property tax credit back to \$500.
- Reinstated the tax free week (originally proposed by me and Sen. David Cappiello) at the end of August for purchasing school clothes.
- Danbury will receive \$1,104,488 in more state funds this year, for a total of \$22,383,705.
- Eliminated the need to securitize the tobacco funds so we will continue to get the most from the settlement.



Bob listening to Reverend
Preston Tallman back home
in Danbury



Bob listening to testimony in
support of a Cardiac Care
Unit being established at
Danbury Hospital



Students from Morris Street
School visiting with Bob in
the House Chamber

Representative Bob Godfrey: Proven Leadership Making a Difference

On Health Care:

Every year you rank Health Care as one of your top priorities on my constituent survey. You understand that this is the single most important issue to improve our quality of life and ensure the safety and health of our children. We tackled several important issues this year through the budget and other bills to make quality health care more available to you:

- We eliminated both the recovery provision and asset test for ConnPACE applicants without increasing co-pays or premiums. (Budget)
- We eliminated co-pays and premiums for HUSKY and Medicaid recipients while allowing adults to get back on the HUSKY program. (Budget)
- State law now requires nursing homes and hospitals to inform patients of their state and federal rights through a written brochure entitled "The Patient's Bill of Rights." (PA 04-158)
- Insurers must now cover wigs up to \$350 for cancer patients who lose their hair through chemotherapy. (PA 04-34)

If you have any questions regarding the new Medicare Prescription Cards, call the Center for Medicare Advocacy at (800) 262-4414. They will be able to provide a free brochure to help you with any of your concerns!

Cardiac Care at Danbury Hospital



Bob testifying at the Danbury Hospital Certificate of Need Public Hearing

Danbury Hospital has asked the Connecticut Office of Health Care Access to let the hospital make angioplasty and open-heart surgery available to patients from our area. Currently, a patient has to travel to New York, Bridgeport, or New Haven, even in an emergency. The first hour after a heart attack is critical to a patient's survival. And we all know what traffic is like – no way you can reach any of these places in time.

No brainer? It should be. But the other hospitals are fighting the application, because they're afraid they will lose money. Shouldn't patient survival override the bottom line?

There have been two recent public hearings, one at the hospital. I testified myself, and I'm very impressed with the tremendous community support for expanding your access to quality health care. I'm expecting a decision by summer's end.



Bob with Danbury High students visiting the Capitol

demonstrated, we are on the vanguard of environmental legislation. Long after the budget cycle is completed and Gov. John G. Rowland's impeachment proceedings are a mere footnote in history, these initiatives will have a long-lasting effect on improving our environment.

The **Clean Cars Act** (PA 04-84) ensures that, beginning in 2008, all new vehicles sold in Connecticut use less-polluting engines, and 10 percent use ultra low-emission, hybrid gas-electric or zero-emission technology. The landmark legislation will bring significant health benefits to residents of Connecticut, especially seniors and children who are most susceptible to diseases related to air pollution. The stricter emissions standards under this act will allow the more than one million Connecticut residents living within a mile of the state's highways to breathe a healthy sigh of relief.

Unchecked rapid growth imposes stresses on local and state government by draining resources for education, transportation and other quality-of-life needs. I pushed hard for the **Water Company Lands Act** (PA 04-200), which establishes financial incentives for shareholders to preserve land purchased from water companies for open space purposes. The greater the percentage of purchased land that is allotted for purposes of conservation, the greater the share of profit earned by shareholders.

The safety of environmental conditions is not limited to the outdoors, however, which is why I proposed provisions protecting indoor air quality. The success of legislation passed last year protecting teachers and students from poor indoor air quality in schools was emulated by other facilities in the private and public sector across the state. This year, the **Indoor Air Quality Projects Act** (PA 04-129) bolstered last year's legislation by permitting the release of state funds for programs relating to indoor air quality measures.

On The Environment:

The benefits of the reforms put in place this session will be felt by Danbury residents now and will serve as a lasting legacy to future generations to show our concern for their health, safety and quality-of-life. Recently, the state Department of Public Health showed that more than one in ten of Connecticut's children have asthma, and in April, the Environmental Protection Agency reported that Connecticut residents breathe some of the worst air in the Northeast. Reports such as these demonstrate that more work is to be done to pass pro-environmental legislation that benefits the health of all. The pro-environment legislation approved by the General Assembly will have implications nationwide; as our state has effectively



Bob with Attorney General Richard Blumenthal, working together to advocate environmental legislation

The **Climate Change Act** (PA 04-252) sets bold standards to confront the harmful effects of global warming — when carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, produced in large part by the burning of fossil fuels, trap heat in the atmosphere. Without having a negative impact on our region's business and industry, the Climate Change Act encourages the state to develop a long-range plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2010 and sets an additional 10 percent reduction by 2020.

This session, the General Assembly confronted the reality that Connecticut's aging power grid needs to be upgraded to meet current energy demands. We approved legislation (PA 04-246) that ensures any new power line built in the state will be buried underground or placed at an acceptable distance from any structure or field where children and families may live or play. We also extended the **Long Island Sound Moratorium** for another year, but allow waivers so certain repairs and unforeseen emergencies can be dealt with. This act (PA 04-222) also imposes an annual host fee of 40 cents per linear foot on any line that is installed within Connecticut's borders. This act shows that the safety of residents will not be overlooked and we will be compensated for any effects these projects may have on our land.

for more info call me at 800-842-1902 or e-mail me at bob.godfrey@po.state.ct.us